

wherein the dressing has substantially the same thickness in the region of the grain peaks and in the region of the grain valleys.

The rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the combination of Schmoock in view of Nobuto and further in view of Steigerwald is respectfully traversed. The cited references fail to suggest the claimed carrier having a finely fibrous topside.

Claim 51 specifies the following properties:

- (1) the a dressing has a grain texture having grain peaks and grain valleys on its face side,
- (2) the dressing has capillaries which extend through its entire thickness, and
- (3) the dressing has substantially the same thickness in the region of the grain peaks and in the region of the grain valleys.

Schmoock discloses a leather-containing laminate. See the Abstract. This reference fails to disclose or suggest a dressing having capillaries which extend through its entire thickness. For putting in a pattern or similar structure, the Examiner suggests embossing, see column 5, line 38 and column 6, line 50. For connection of the layers, the Examiner suggests a hotmelt, see column 4, line 2. However, neither of these alternatives would produce capillaries which go through the entire thickness of the dressing.

Nobuto do not disclose a carrier having a finely fibrous topside as claimed but rather an artificial leather. Therefore, this reference fails to disclose or suggest features (1)-(3) discussed above.

Steigerwald also discloses an artificial leather (i.e., an imitation leather) which is perforated. However, Steigerwald suggests using an energy-carrying ray for accomplishing the perforation. By this, it can be avoided that the holes “burnt” by the ray will only effect the first ply. See column 2, last few lines, which is praised by Steigerwald. One skilled in the art would thus not be motivated to deviate from the process disclosed in the reference.

Moreover, Steigerwald fails to disclose the combination of features (1)-(3) discussed above.

In view of the foregoing, the combination of Schmoock, Nobuto and Steigerwald fails to suggest the claimed carrier having a finely fibrous topside, because the references fails to disclose features (1), (2) and (3) discussed above alone or in combination. Accordingly, the subject matter of the pending claims is not obvious over the cited references. Withdrawal of this ground of rejection is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Early notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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